Before we proceed

M 361 342 643 to the study of dwellings in that region, it is well to note that among all the western populations, the hut of the great chief, that is to say, the "chief of the [46] earth," Mfumu na Tse, is built separately, a little apart from the general alignment or facing the principal street. This hut is surrounded by a fence, and the enclosure contains the royal hut, the reception palace, and the huts of the chief's wives.

M 644 Entry into the chief's courtyard is forbidden to his subjects. Only the dignitaries are admitted there when royal audiences are held, and to receive them the chief holds court in the hut that serves as a reception building. All around the enclosure, the "chief of the earth" has special trees of the cactus family planted. This, we were assured by the future successor of the Mosengere chief of Penge, is a royal prerogative very strictly observed. The existence of this enclosure around the royal

S [342 415]

Fig. 29. Basakata Huts Connected by a Common Court.

dwelling recalls the custom in Banfumu villages of arranging the huts in family groups, and it seems to indicate a certain affinity between these different tribes.

M 342 In the region of the Ipanga-Batitu, besides the small hut whose roof has the oblique double slope and horizontal ridge and is covered with vegetal tiles, which serves as a secondary, temporary

M 301 We have already given a description of the dress costume of Natali, chief of the Banfumu of Kapanda.

S 643 301 293 302 For important ceremonies Chief Etoti, an old and unsociable Wadia, wore a hairdo of small braids adorned with three brass disks. He also wore a necklace made of hair from an elephant's tail, from which hung a triangular apron embellished with eight brass disks, signs of his great power and of his title as the oldest and greatest Mfumu na Tse in the whole Lake Leopold II region. His face was smeared with ngula, his eyes encircled

Fig. 108. Etoti, Unsociable Old Chief of the Wadia, in Full Regalia.

with mpembe, and there was a long white line on each arm. In one hand he held the royal fly-chaser, and in the other, two chief's staffs.

M 643 293 301 Kakua, the deposed Batitu chief, at all times wore his hairdo of small braids adorned with a large brass disk. His belt was decorated with a leopard skin and two iron bells, prerogatives

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reserved to the Mfumu. The large royal knife, encased in a sheath, hung from a brass chain worn diagonally over the shoulder, and Kakua [187] never parted with his great bow and his quiver of arrows with large iron heads.

643 293 301

[304 301 535]

Fig. 109. Dancing Costume of the Yaelima-Bokala of the Wumbuli Region. Tattooing on the Back.

During dances and ceremonies the women attach the most unusual objects around their waists, often large bushy branches. Among the Ipanga and Batitu, as well as in the region of Wumbuli and Dekese, betrothal and wedding dances are executed in special attire, heavily bedecked with beads and cowries.

292 301 535

These ornaments are not at all consistent. They vary according to taste and the whims and means of the natives, but certain parts of the dress costume worn by the betrothed couple at the dances celebrating the engagement seem to have a special meaning, to which we shall return later.